Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A device for use in the collection and testing of a sample, comprising:

a. a housing having an internal recess; and

b. a sample collection device;

said housing being adapted to receive at least a portion of said sample collection device in the internal recess therein and to shield a sample collected on said sample collection device, said housing also being adapted to receive an insertable testing element such that, on insertion of said testing element into said housing, the testing element is in liquid-conductive communication with a sample collected on said sample collection device.

2. (Currently amended) A testing device for the identification of an analyte of interest in a sample, comprising:

a. a housing having an internal recess;

b. a sample collection device; and

c. at least one insertable testing element that is separate from said sample collection device;

said housing being adapted to receive at least a portion of said sample collection device in the internal recess therein and to shield a sample collected on said sample collection device, said housing also being adapted to receive the or each said insertable testing element such that, on insertion of said testing element into said housing, the testing element is in liquid-conductive communication with a sample collected on said sample collection device.

3. (Original) A device according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein, on insertion of the testing element into the housing, the testing element is in direct liquid-conductive communication with a sample collected on the sample collection device.

4. (Original) A device according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the sample collection device is a swab.

5. (Original) A device according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the sample collection device collects a predetermined amount of the sample.

6. (Original) A device according to claim 5, wherein the sample collection device comprises a hydrophilic, porous matrix of defined volumetric capacity, affixed to the base of a dipstick or handle.

7. (Original) A device according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the housing is provided with a first window or aperture communicating with the internal recess within the housing for insertion of the sample collection device, together with a least one additional window or aperture which is separate from the first window or aperture and which also communicates with the internal recess for insertion of the, or each, insertable testing element so that the testing element is in liquid-conductive communication with a sample collected on said sample collection device.

8. (Original) A device according to claim 2, wherein the insertable testing element is a guaiac-based test strip.

9. (Original) A device according to claim 2, wherein the insertable testing element is an immunochromatographic test strip.

10. (Original) A device according to claim 2, which comprises two or more insertable testing elements each of which, when inserted into the housing, is in liquid-conductive communication with a sample collected on the sample collection device.

11. (Original) A device according to claim 10, wherein the testing elements are the same elements.

12. (Original) A device according to claim 10, wherein the testing elements are different elements.

13. (Original) A device according to claim 10, wherein at least one of said testing elements is an immunochromatographic test strip.

14. (Original) A device according to claim 10, wherein at least one of said testing elements is a guaiac-based test strip.

15. (Original) A device according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the housing is provided with a solvent application aperture in communication with the internal recess.

16. (Currently amended) A method for the identification of an analyte of interest in a sample, ~~using a device according to claim 1 or claim 2~~ comprising:

a. collecting a sample on a ~~the~~ sample collection device,

b. inserting at least a sample-carrying portion of said sample collection device into ~~the~~ an internal recess ~~of the~~ within a housing of ~~the~~ a testing device, said housing being adapted to receive said sample-carrying portion of said sample collection device in the internal recess and to shield the sample, and

c. subsequently inserting ~~the~~ an insertable testing element into the housing such that the testing element is in liquid-conductive communication with said sample.

17. (Original) A method according to claim 16, further comprising:

d. applying a solvent to said sample to enable transfer of at least part of said sample, or a component thereof, to the testing element.

18. (New) A method according to claim 16 wherein the collecting step includes using the sample collection device to obtain the sample from a patient.

19. (New) A method according to claim 16 wherein the sample collection device comprises a swab.

20. (New) A method according to claim 19 wherein the sample collection device comprises a hydrophilic, porous matrix of defined volumetric capacity, affixed to the base of a dipstick or handle and configured to obtain a sample from the patient.

21. (New) A method according to claim 16 wherein steps (b) and (c) are performed at different geographic locations.

22. (New) A method according to claim 16 wherein steps (b) and (c) are performed on different dates.

23. (New) A method according to claim 16 further comprising, between steps (b) and (c), allowing the sample to become dehydrated within the housing.

24. (New) A method according to claim 23 further comprising, prior to step (c), rehydrating the sample.

25. (New) A method according to claim 16 wherein the housing defines an opening configured to provide said communication between the test element and the sample collection device, the opening being at least partially covered by a cover strip, and step (c) comprises inserting the test element under a portion of the cover strip.

26. (New) A method according to claim 16 wherein said insertable testing element is separate from said sample collection device.

27. (New) A device according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the housing is configured to position the test element so that a sample-carrying portion of the sample collection device is interposed between the housing and the test element.

28. (New) A device according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the housing defines an opening configured to provide said communication between the test element and the sample collection device.

29. (New) A device according to claim 28 wherein the opening is at least partially covered by a cover strip.

30. (New) A kit for use in the identification of an analyte of interest in a sample, comprising

a. a sample collection device configured to obtain the sample from a source of said sample;

b. a testing element, configured to identify the analyte of interest;

c. a housing having (i) a recess configured to receive at least a sample-carrying portion of the sample collection device, and (iii) an opening configured to provide liquid-conductive communication between the sample-carrying portion of the sample collection device and a portion of the testing element; and

d. a cover configured to shield said sample-carrying portion.of said sample collection device after said sample-carrying portion of said sample collection device has been received by said recess.

31. (New) A kit according to claim 30 wherein said cover comprises a cover strip covering said opening, the cover strip being partially sealed to said housing, and defining an opening through which the testing element may be inserted.

32. (New) A kit according to claim 30 wherein said sample collection device is configured to obtain a sample directly from a patient.

33. (New) A kit according to claim 30 wherein said housing further defines an opening for receiving said sample-carrying portion into said recess

34. (New) A kit according to claim 30 wherein said sample collection device is separate from said testing element.